Thursday to lift a ban on U.S. arms sales and aid to Argentina. The ban was imposed in 1978 because of alleged human rights violations. The Reagan administration had asked Congress to lift the ban, saying it frustrated any dialogue with Argentina on strategic concerns. Bowing to strong administration opposition, the House Foreign Affairs committee rejected 20 to 15 an amendment ...g a finding that the Argentine government was trying to trace thousands of kidnapped persons whose fate is unknown. Last year's State Department report on human rights said the rights situation in Argentina had improved after a period in which security forces had carried out a campaign of violence against alleged terrorists and subversives.

Californian Named ASCS Administrator

Everett Rank, a California farmer, has been officially named as administrator of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. The ASCS, as it is known, is the largest farm-program agency in the Agriculture Department. The job pays $50,112 a year. Rank, 59, also carries the title of executive vice president of the Commodity Credit Corp., a wholly owned corporation within the department which carries out key farm programs, including price supports for crops and dairy products. The agency reaches virtually into every corner of the country through its 50 state and 2,700 county offices. Rank, a native of Fresno, Calif., served for 10 years as chairman of the Fresno County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee and in 1969 was appointed chairman of the state committee. He was western regional director of the federal agency from 1974-77.

U.S.S.R. May Buy Surplus U.S. Butter

The United States is considering putting large quantities of surplus American butter on the world market where it would probably be bought by East Europeans and perhaps the Soviet Union, administration sources said Thursday night. The current world-market price for butter is about $1.05 a pound, which is roughly half a dollar less than the Department of Agriculture has paid for the 375 million pounds of government-owned butter now in storage. If 200 million pounds of butter could be sold on the world market, this would mean earnings to the government of about $200 million and savings of future storage costs. But the Reagan administration is concerned that such a sale could also be interpreted as a $50 million "subsidy" by U.S. taxpayers for butter consumption in the communist bloc. This conclusion could be drawn because the butter will be sold not just for less than the government paid for it, but also for about a dollar a pound less than Americans currently pay for butter.

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